

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Version # \_\_\_\_\_

APP # 700285

#### **A. Statement of Planning Objectives**

The Kern River Ranger District is submitting a planning proposal to conduct an environmental analysis for motorized travel management in the Piute Mountains located approximately 50 miles northeast of Bakersfield, California in Kern County. The Sequoia National Forest has been in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement for Travel Route Designation for areas of the Forest without a designated route system for the last several years. The areas include the Greenhorn, Breckenridge, and Piute Mountains, lower Kern Canyon, Lake Isabella, and portions of the Western Divide Ranger District outside the boundary of the Giant Sequoia National Monument. In June 2008, the Piute Fire ignited and burned into the project area in the Piute Mountains. The fire consumed over 37,000 acres, with high intensity where fuel loading was excessive. A majority of the trails (including unauthorized routes) within the fire burn area were designated for motorized use. A series of heavy rain events also hit this area, causing excessive runoff and flash flooding. Early evaluations indicate that erosion was intense in much of the burned area. After review and consultation, the Forest Supervisor decided to remove the Piute Mountains area from the Motorized Travel Route Designation process. Within the Piute Fire burn area, transportation routes (both roads and trails) need to be surveyed and assessed for resource concerns, in light of the effects of the Piute fire. Design features, such as water bar and rolling bar installation, rerouting of route, or stream crossing hardening, may be proposed as a result of assessments. Within the Piute Mountains area, there is approximately 144 miles of user-created routes inventoried by the Forest Service, and 108 miles of National Forest Transportation System roads and trails. The project would fund salaries for an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) to conduct field surveys, assess resource concerns, and complete an environmental analysis. Other activities would include a route inventory of areas with motorized use (including motorcycle, OHVs and 4WD) using a Contract work force. The IDT would develop a proposed action, based on the assessments and public input. An environmental document would be prepared that would include significant issues raised by the public, development of alternatives that address identified significant issues, and environmental consequences that would result if a developed alternative were to be implemented. The applicant would prepare an environmental document, most likely an Environmental Impact Statement or a Environmental Assessment.

#### **B. Relation of Proposed Project to OHV Recreation**

In 2005, the Forest Service published final travel management regulations in the Federal Register. This final Travel Management Rule (TMR) requires designation of those roads, trails, and areas that are open to motor vehicle use on national forests. Only roads that are part of a National Forest Transportation System (NFTS) may be designated for motorized use. The Piute Mountain area was included in the environmental analysis for the Sequoia National Forest Motorized Travel Management planning efforts until the Piute Fire ignited and burned into the project area in 2008. The proposed project would complete the environmental analysis for motorized travel route designation and identify roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use in keeping with the 2005 Travel Management Rule. A majority of the trails (including unauthorized routes) within the fire burn area were designated for motorized use. Only the prohibition of cross-country travel is currently being considered for this area, not any changes or additions to the National Forest Transportation System.

Nearly all visitors to the Sequoia National Forest, regardless of the purpose for their visit, use the motorized transportation system on the Forest to reach their destination. This proposal would provide a diversity of road and trail opportunities for OHV recreation users to experience a variety of environments and modes of travel consistent with the National Forest recreation role and land capability to sustain OHV recreation opportunities.

#### **C. Statement of Activities**

The applicant proposes to survey and assess routes in the Piute Mountain Area associated with motorized use (including motorcycle, OHVs, and 4 WD vehicles) and assess for recreation OHV opportunities. Activities include the need to evaluate effects of routes on Archaeological sites and natural resources (botany, hydrology, soil, geology, wildlife and aquatic species, lands and minerals, air quality) and effects of routes on Roadless Area characteristics and the local economy. The IDT would develop a proposed action based on the environmental assessments and public input. An

environmental document would be prepared that would include significant issues raised by the public, alternatives that address identified significant issues, and the environmental consequences that would result if a developed alternative were to be implemented. The environmental document would most likely be either an Environmental Impact Statement or a Environmental Assessment.

**D. List of Reports**

Trail Condition Rating Form (Green, Yellow, Red) to assess trail conditions; OHV Trail Monitoring Form; Soil Condition surveys and Stream Crossing Assessments, Archaeological Reconnaissance Report, Biological Evaluation and Assessment Reports for wildlife, plants, aquatic, etc.; Lands and Minerals Report; Engineering Transportation Assessment for roads and trails; Environmental Assessment or a Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement for Motorized Travel Management in the Piute Mountains.

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**1. Timeline for Completion**

Attachments:

[Piute Planning Timeline](#)

**2. Optional Project-Specific Application Documents**

**3. Optional Project-specific Maps**

Attachments:

[Piute Mountains](#)  
[2008 Piute Fire map](#)

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
Agency: USFS - Sequoia National Forest  
Application: Planning

6/2/2009

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:		Version # _____	APP # _____
<b>APPLICANT NAME :</b>	USFS - Sequoia National Forest		
<b>PROJECT TITLE :</b>	Planning	<b>PROJECT NUMBER (Division use only) :</b>	
<b>PROJECT TYPE :</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Education & Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration		
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION :</b>	<p>The Kern River Ranger District is submitting a planning proposal to conduct an environmental analysis for motorized travel management in the Piute Mountains located approximately 50 miles northeast of Bakersfield, California in Kern County. The Sequoia National Forest has been in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement for Travel Route Designation for areas of the Forest without a designated route system for the last several years. The areas include the Greenhorn, Breckenridge, and Piute Mountains, lower Kern Canyon, Lake Isabella, and portions of the Western Divide Ranger District outside the boundary of the Giant Sequoia National Monument. In June 2008, the Piute Fire ignited and burned into the project area in the Piute Mountains. The fire consumed over 37,000 acres, with high intensity where fuel loading was excessive. A majority of the trails (including unauthorized routes) within the fire burn area were designated for motorized use. A series of heavy rain events also hit this area, causing excessive runoff and flash flooding. Early evaluations indicate that erosion was intense in much of the burned area. After review and consultation, the Forest Supervisor decided to remove the Piute Mountains area from the Motorized Travel Route Designation process. Within the Piute Fire burn area, transportation routes (both roads and trails) need to be surveyed and assessed for resource concerns, in light of the effects of the Piute fire. Design features, such as water bar and rolling bar installation, rerouting of route, or stream crossing hardening, may be proposed as a result of assessments. Within the Piute Mountains area, there is approximately 144 miles of user-created routes inventoried by the Forest Service, and 108 miles of National Forest Transportation System roads and trails. The project would fund salaries for an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) to conduct field surveys, assess resource concerns, and complete an environmental analysis. Other activities would include a route inventory of areas with motorized use (including motorcycle, OHVs and 4WD) using a Contract work force. The IDT would develop a proposed action, based on the assessments and public input. An environmental document would be prepared that would include significant issues raised by the public, development of alternatives that address identified significant issues, and environmental consequences that would result if a developed alternative were to be implemented. The applicant would prepare an environmental document, most likely an Environmental Impact Statement or a Environmental Assessment.</p>		

	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
<b>DIRECT EXPENSES</b>							
<b>Program Expenses</b>							
1	<b>Staff</b>						
	Other-IDT Leader Notes : Supervisor's Office GS 12 Interdisciplinary Team Leader	150.000	320.000	DAY	24,000.00	24,000.00	48,000.00
	Other-Archaeologist Notes : Kern River District Archaeologist GS 11	20.000	250.000	DAY	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
	Other-Archaeologist Notes : Kern River GS 9 Arch Survey Crew	50.000	263.000	DAY	13,150.00	0.00	13,150.00

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
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Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
Other-Archaeologist Notes : Kern River GS 5 Arch Survey Crew	180.000	130.000	DAY	23,400.00	0.00	23,400.00
Resources Staff Notes : Wildlife biologist GS 11	50.000	350.000	DAY	17,500.00	0.00	17,500.00
Resources Staff Notes : Kern River GS 7	50.000	250.000	DAY	12,500.00	0.00	12,500.00
Resources Staff Notes : Supervisor's Office Botanist GS 11	50.000	350.000	DAY	8,750.00	8,750.00	17,500.00
Resources Staff Notes : Kern River Hydrologist GS 9	50.000	263.000	DAY	6,575.00	6,575.00	13,150.00
Other-Recreation Manager Notes : Kern River GS 11	50.000	304.000	DAY	7,600.00	7,600.00	15,200.00
Other-Roads Specialist Notes : Supervisor's Office GS 9	30.000	250.000	DAY	3,750.00	3,750.00	7,500.00
Other-Lands and Minerals Notes : Kern River GS 7	40.000	250.000	DAY	5,000.00	5,000.00	10,000.00
Other-Public Affairs Officer Notes : Supervisor's Office GS 13	25.000	400.000	DAY	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Other-Asst Rec Officer Notes : Kern River GS 7	50.000	270.000	DAY	6,750.00	6,750.00	13,500.00
Other-GIS Specialist Notes : Supervisor's Office GS 9	20.000	325.000	DAY	3,250.00	3,250.00	6,500.00
Other-Forest Supervisor Notes : Supervisor's Office GS 15	30.000	550.000	DAY	0.00	16,500.00	16,500.00
Other-Forest Rec Officer Notes : Supervisor's Office GS 13	30.000	480.000	DAY	0.00	14,400.00	14,400.00

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
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	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
	Other-District Ranger Notes : Kern River District Ranger GS 13	35.000	480.000	DAY	0.00	16,800.00	16,800.00
	Management and Admin Staff Notes : Supervisor's Office Budget and Finance (2)	15.000	700.000	DAY	0.00	10,500.00	10,500.00
	Field Office Staff Notes : Kern River VIS GS 6 (1)	30.000	240.000	DAY	0.00	7,200.00	7,200.00
	Field Office Staff Notes : Kern River VIS GS 5 (1)	10.000	180.000	DAY	0.00	1,800.00	1,800.00
	Other-Forestry Technician Notes : Kern River FPT GS 7	20.000	270.000	DAY	0.00	5,400.00	5,400.00
	Other-District Ranger Notes : Western Divide District Ranger GS 13	5.000	480.000	DAY	0.00	2,400.00	2,400.00
	Other- Engineering Notes : Supervisor's Office GS 13 Engineering	5.000	360.000	DAY	0.00	1,800.00	1,800.00
	Other-Planner Notes : Supervisor's Office Planner GS 12	20.000	320.000	DAY	0.00	6,400.00	6,400.00
	Other-Landscape Architect Notes : Supervisor's Office Landscape Architect GS 11	15.000	350.000	DAY	0.00	5,250.00	5,250.00
	Other-Volunteers Notes : Volunteers (10) volunteers; 10 days @ \$25 day	100.000	25.000	DAY	0.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
	<b>Total for Staff</b>				137,225.00	166,625.00	303,850.00
<b>2</b>	<b>Contracts</b>						
	Other-Teams Notes : TEAMS Route Inventory	1.000	35000.000	EA	35,000.00	0.00	35,000.00
	Other-Economist Notes : Contractor Economist	5.000	500.000	DAY	1,250.00	1,250.00	2,500.00

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
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Application: Planning

6/2/2009

	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
	<b>Total for Contracts</b>				36,250.00	1,250.00	37,500.00
<b>3</b>	<b>Materials / Supplies</b>						
	Other-Helmet Cam Notes : Kern River	1.000	750.000	EA	750.00	0.00	750.00
<b>4</b>	<b>Equipment Use Expenses</b>						
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 3412 Archaeology	4000.000	0.290	MI	1,160.00	0.00	1,160.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 1182 Archaeology	10000.00 0	0.290	MI	2,900.00	0.00	2,900.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 1188 Archaeology	10000.00 0	0.290	MI	2,900.00	0.00	2,900.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 1829 Wildlife	4000.000	0.290	MI	1,160.00	0.00	1,160.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 2919 Wildlife	4000.000	0.290	MI	1,160.00	0.00	1,160.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Supervisor's Office Vehicle 5952 Engineering	10000.00 0	0.290	MI	2,900.00	0.00	2,900.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 1130 Minerals	4000.000	0.360	MI	1,440.00	0.00	1,440.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 2807 Asst Rec Officer	4000.000	0.360	MI	1,440.00	0.00	1,440.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 1331 Recreation	3000.000	0.360	MI	0.00	1,080.00	1,080.00
	Field Vehicle Notes : Kern River Vehicle 3124 District Ranger	1000.000	0.290	MI	0.00	290.00	290.00
	<b>Total for Equipment Use Expenses</b>				15,060.00	1,370.00	16,430.00

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
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	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
5	Equipment Purchases						
6	Others						
7	Administrative Costs						
Total Program Expenses					189,285.00	169,245.00	358,530.00
TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES					189,285.00	169,245.00	358,530.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES					189,285.00	169,245.00	358,530.00

Project Cost Summary for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
 Agency: USFS - Sequoia National Forest  
 Application: Planning

6/2/2009

	Line Item	Grant Request	Match	Total	Narrative
<b>DIRECT EXPENSES</b>					
<b>Program Expenses</b>					
1	Staff	137,225.00	166,625.00	303,850.00	
2	Contracts	36,250.00	1,250.00	37,500.00	
3	Materials / Supplies	750.00	0.00	750.00	
4	Equipment Use Expenses	15,060.00	1,370.00	16,430.00	
5	Equipment Purchases	0.00	0.00	0.00	
6	Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	
7	Administrative Costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>		189,285.00	169,245.00	358,530.00	
<b>TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES</b>		189,285.00	169,245.00	358,530.00	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>189,285.00</b>	<b>169,245.00</b>	<b>358,530.00</b>	

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**ITEM 1 and ITEM 2**

**ITEM 1**

- a. ITEM 1 - Has a CEQA Notice of Determination (NOD) been filed for the Project? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
(Please select Yes or No)

**ITEM 2**

- b. ITEM 2 - Are the proposed activities a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
(Please select Yes or No)
- c. The Application is requesting funds solely for personnel and support to enforce OHV laws and ensure public safety. These activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No
- d. Other. Explain why proposed activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. DO NOT complete ITEMS 3 – 9

This funding grant request is for a planning project only, no ground disturbing activities will occur.

**ITEM 3 - Impact of this Project on Wetlands**

**ITEM 4 - Cumulative Impacts of this Project**

**ITEM 5 - Soil Impacts**

**ITEM 6 - Damage to Scenic Resources**

**ITEM 7 - Hazardous Materials**

Is the proposed Project Area located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code (hazardous materials)? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, describe the location of the hazard relative to the Project site, the level of hazard and the measures to be taken to minimize or avoid the hazards.

**ITEM 8 - Potential for Adverse Impacts to Historical or Cultural Resources**

Would the proposed Project have potential for any substantial adverse impacts to historical or cultural resources? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, describe the potential impacts and for any substantially adverse changes in the significance of historical or cultural resources and measures to be taken to minimize or avoid the impacts.

**ITEM 9 - Indirect Significant Impacts**

**CEQA/NEPA Attachment**

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**1. Project Cost Estimate - Q 1. (Auto populates from Cost Estimate)**

1. As calculated on the Project Cost Estimate, the percentage of the Project costs covered by the Applicant is 3

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☐ 76% or more (10 points)

☐ 51% - 75% (5 points)

☒ 26% - 50% (3 points)

☐ 25% (Match minimum) (No points)

**2. Planning Project - Q 2.**

**A Planning Project - Page 1**

2. The Planning Project would address the following 4

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on special-status species habitats

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on cultural resources

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on soil conditions

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on water quality

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on other recreation uses

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on adjacent lands.

☒ Potential impact to relationships between OHV Recreation and local residents

☒ Toxic or hazardous materials within a Project Area or adjacent property that may impact OHV Recreation

☒ Trail issues such as traffic patterns, trails closures, appropriate uses, etc.

**B. Planning Project - Page 2**

Explain each statement that was checked

The planning project would address special-status species habitat, cultural resources, soil conditions, water quality, and other recreation uses through surveys, specialist reports, trail condition reports, and biological evaluations. The project area will be reviewed for toxic and/or hazardous materials. If found, recommendations will be made regarding their disposal in order to avoid harm where needed. Potential impacts to relationships between OHV Recreation and local residents will be addressed where needed. Adjacent land includes private property and Bureau of Land Management. Issues of traffic patterns, trail closures, appropriate uses, will be analysed and addressed through IDT members and through the public participation process.

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☒ 6 or more items checked (4 points)

☐ 4 to 5 items checked (3 points)

☐ 2 to 3 items checked (2 points)

☐ 1 or no items checked (No points)

**3. Motorized Access - Q 3.**

3. The Project would lead to improved facilities that provide motorized access to the following nonmotorized recreation opportunities 6

(Check all that apply) Scoring: 2 points each, up to a maximum of 6 points (Please select applicable values)

☒ Camping

☒ Birding

☒ Hiking

☒ Equestrian trails

☐ Fishing

☐ Rock Climbing

☒ Other (Specify) [Hunting]

**4. Public Input - Q 4.**

4. The Project proposal was developed with public input employing the following 2

(Check all that apply) Scoring: Maximum of 2 points (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Meeting(s) with the general public to discuss Project (1 point)  
☒ Conference call(s) with interested parties (1 point)  
☒ Meeting(s) with stakeholders (1 point)

Explain each statement that was checked

The Project was discussed at Motorized Travel Management workshops for the Sequoia National Forest Draft Environmental Impact Statement in February 2009. The project was discussed at the quarterly meetings with California Off Road Vehicle Association, Stewards of the Sequoia, California Trail Users Coalition, and other interested public in January 2009. The project was discussed with various stakeholders during the analysis phase for Piute Mountains Fire Recovery.

**5. Stakeholder Input - Q 5.**

5. If the Project were approved, the planning process would incorporate substantial stakeholder input: 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ No (No points) ☒ Yes (5 points)

If 'Yes', explain, specifically, how it would be 'substantial'. Identify stakeholders

During the Motorized Travel Management planning process, the Sequoia National Forest has worked closely with key stakeholders including private property owners in the Piute Mountains, OHV organizations such as CORVA, Stewards of the Sequoia, California Trail Users Coalition, Backcountry Horsemen, and Friends of Jawbone. In addition, adjacent public land managers from Bureau of Land Management and representative from Kern County Roads Department will be involved in the planning efforts. Other stakeholders include various OHV groups, local individuals, property owners, and groups with whom volunteer agreements exist. Team members will work with State agencies including the State Historic Preservation Office, California Department of Fish and Game, and the State OHV Division.

**6. Utilization of Partnerships - Q 6.**

6. The Project will utilize partnerships to successfully accomplish the Project. The number of partner organizations that will participate in the Project are 4

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☒ 4 or more (4 points) ☐ 2 to 3 (2 points)  
☐ 1 (1 point) ☐ None (No points)

List partner organization(s)

Bureau of Land Management, Kern County Roads Department, Piute Mountain property owners, Stewards of the Sequoia, California Trail Users Coalition, California Off Highway Vehicle Association, Bakersfield Trail Blazers, Ridgecrest Gear Grinders, Backcountry Horsemen, and Kern Trails.

**7. Sustain OHV Opportunity - Q 7.**

7. The Planning Project sustains OHV Opportunity in the following manner 14

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Project will develop management plans for existing OHV Opportunity (4 points)  
☒ Project will complete environmental review for an OHV Development Project (3 points)  
☒ Project supports development of OHV Opportunities adjacent to population centers (3 points)  
☒ Project supports development of OHV Opportunities in areas that lack legal OHV Opportunity (2 points)  
☒ Project will develop a system of designated OHV routes for an existing OHV Opportunity (2 points)

Explain each statement that was checked

The project will complete motorized route designation efforts for the Piute Mountains through development of an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. The project will engage services of an Economist to assess economic effects and opportunities for adjacent population centers in the Kern River Valley and adjacent property owners in the Piute Mountains. A majority of the trails (including unauthorized routes) within the fire burn area were designated for motorized use.

**8. Identification of Funding Sources - Q 8.**

8. Funds for implementing the completed plan have been identified 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☐ No (No points)

☒ Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

Historically, funding sources associated with designated travel routes has been a combination of Forest Service appropriated dollars and State funding, such as green sticker funds. In recent years, appropriated dollars have been minimal. Trail route maintenance typically is accomplished with a combination of efforts, including work provided by volunteers, appropriated Federal funding and State funding through grant agreements. Costs associated with implementing changes to road use, will be paid for primarily through Federal appropriated dollars.

Reference Document

Volunteer Agreements with Stewards of the Sequoia, Ridgecrest Gear Grinders, Bakersfield Trail Blazers, Backcountry Horsemen, CORVA and California Trail Users Coalition.  
Federal appropriated funding

**9. Offsite Impacts - Q 9.**

9. The Planning Project would address offsite impacts relative to the Project Area (e.g., sound, fugitive dust, runoff): 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☐ No (No points)

☒ Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

The Interdisciplinary Team will look at off site sedimentary delivery and impacts to adjacent private land off Forest. Field surveys and trail evaluations will assess off site runoff and the the IDT will make recommendations for trail treatments for OHV single track and hiking trail stabilization, stream crossing stabilization, trail gully stabilization and erosion control barriers.